



Academic Board

Supplementary agenda

for the meeting on Wednesday 15 April 1998

Additional material and amendments to the agenda papers are set out below.

P *The following items have been starred:*

- A1. Starring
- A4. Report of the Chair, Part II
- A5. Statement by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Part II
- C1. Report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Part II
- C2. Report of the Graduate Studies Committee, Part II
- C3. Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee, Part II
- C4. Report of the Research Committee, Part II
- C5. Report of the Library and Information Technology Committee, Part II
- C6. Report of the Academic Staffing Committee, Part I
Item 2. Draft Policy Document - University Chairs
Item 6. Interim Arrangements for Academic Promotion for 1998 only
- C6. Report of the Academic Staffing Committee, Part II

additional and revised material

Agenda page

A4. Report of the Chair

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

(agenda page 2)

Senate, at its meeting on 6 April 1998, on the report of the Academic Board:

- (1) noted the new Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching Awards which had been adopted by the Board.
- (2) noted that the Board had adopted amendments to the Board Resolutions to make immediate provision for electronic submission and examination of theses.
- (3) noted that the Board had approved a common usage of the terms thesis, treatise, dissertation, essay and long essay as units of study within postgraduate programs.
- (4) noted issues being addressed by Board committees.

9. **Questions on notice**

(agenda page 4)

Following receipt of the questions from Mr Wilkinson, I sought advice from Professor Cass and Professor Eltis, who responded as follows:

Question 1:

At the March meeting of the Academic Board Professor Spate brought to the Board's attention a case of overcrowding in the lecture theatre which accommodates the unit of study Art History and Theory ARHT1001. This is a core unit of study for students in first year Art History and Theory in Semester I. The Department of Art History and Theory ensured that a lecture theatre was booked for this unit of study at the appropriate time (November 1997). The stipulated size of the lecture theatre was based on student numbers in previous years. However the number of students undertaking the first year course in Art History and Theory in Semester I 1998 is considerably greater than in previous years. On becoming aware of the problem, Professor Spate attempted to book a larger lecture theatre through Room Bookings but this request was not able to be fulfilled at that point in the Semester. Professor Spate offered to repeat her series of lectures but this proved to be impossible to timetable at that point in the Semester because of very considerable difficulties in accommodating timetables for a very large cohort of first year students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and also because Professor Spate has several guest lecturers who were not able to re-schedule their commitments. Because of the difficulties in rescheduling the lecture time, several other courses of action have been undertaken to assist students while student numbers have been stabilising up to the HECS census date (31 March 1998). Professor Spate has ensured that all lectures are taped and that carousels of slides, as well as the audio tapes, are made available to students following each lecture. The slides and the tapes are available in the Department of Art History and Theory and groups of students may book a tutorial room in the Department, organised by the Image Library of the Department. In this way concerted attempts have been made to accommodate students' teaching needs.

Question 2:

The process of allocating lecture rooms commences in November each year when Room Bookings seeks requests for space needs for the forthcoming Academic Year. The requests are made via the Web or directly with Room Bookings which collates them and forwards them to Dr Jim Ward (Timetabling). Dr Ward then produces a timetable that matches the requests to the available rooms and the results are advertised accordingly. It should be noted this timetable can only be tested rigorously when the students arrive for their lectures.

If an overcrowding situation occurs that is related to the facility involved, Room Bookings attempts to reschedule the timing, to make another adequate facility available, or to arrange an "exchange" of rooms to overcome the problem. In most cases in the past, there have been few instances where the pressure on space has not been relieved. A difficulty arises, however, when a request is made for a lecture theatre or other space and the unit of study in question is offered in more than one stream. Room Bookings is not able to influence the way in which students select one of the streams and this "choice" can lead to a situation where the number of students presenting for a particular time exceeds the capacity of the lecture theatre requested. This happened in the Department of History this year and was caused by the flow of students from one stream to another, creating a significant imbalance in the distribution of the total student cohort across the three streams in the unit of study for first year History students.

While the Department may wish to provide students with as much freedom of choice as is possible, clearly there are some accommodation parameters that make a totally free choice of attendance times impossible and it becomes a matter for the academic unit to control. Given the numbers of students involved in first year classes, there will always be timetabling constraints and the potential for controls on freedom of choice so as to minimise disruption and prevent over-crowding.

A5. Statement by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Part I

1. Report on Senate Matters

(agenda page 5)

Senate, at its meeting held on 6 April 1998:

- (1) noted the Vice-Chancellor's confidential report on:
 - (a) the joint venture with the University of New South Wales
 - (b) the University Private Hospital
 - (c) the Second Olympic Water Polo Venue
 - (d) the Sydney Business School.
- (2) noted that the Chair Appointments Committee, which met prior to the Senate meeting, had approved an offer of appointment to the Chair of Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture; the award of the title of Clinical Professor in the Faculty of Medicine; the appointment of two Visiting Professors in the Faculty of Arts and one in the Faculty of Economics; and the award of the title of Emeritus Professor to a retired member of the staff of the Faculty of Science.
- (3) noted four reports on discipline of students.
- (4) appointed Ms Deborah Searle to membership of the Law Extension Committee in the category of "Two solicitors appointed by Senate on the nomination of the Law Society of New South Wales" for a term of office to conclude on 30 November 1998.
- (5) appointed The Hon Matthew John Robert Clarke QC as Chairman of Student Proctorial Boards for a one year term of office.
- (6) noted that the Vice-Chancellor had accepted the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities and Social Sciences) that Professor Terry Walter be appointed as Acting Dean until 31 December 1998 or until a substantive Dean took up the appointment, whichever was the sooner.
- (7) noted the report on changes to the *University of Sydney Act* over the last couple of years, of which the University had not been notified by the Minister for Education
- (8) noted that the Vice-Chancellor had approved the recommendation of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Health Sciences) that the Unit of Rural Health be granted the title and status of a Department in the Faculty of Medicine.
- (9) congratulated the Chancellor on her recent invitation to accept appointment as an Honorary Fellow of Sancta Sophia College.
- (10) resolved to congratulate Professor Alice Tay of the Faculty of Law on her recent appointment as President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.
- (11) noted some of the media coverage to the Vice-Chancellor's address to the Education 98 conference, which suggested widespread interest in these issues and concerns.
- (12) noted the draft 1997 University Annual Report.
- (13) noted the Vice-Chancellor's response to a question on the implementation of equity-of-access principles in postgraduate coursework.
- (14)
 - (i) in accord with the new guidelines for the setting up of companies, approved the proposal that two Directors of IBIS Pty Ltd be appointed at this time, namely the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Gavin Brown, (or his nominee) and the Chair of Finance Committee, Mr Peter Burrows; and
 - (ii) approved the proposal that the Directors of IBIS Pty Ltd be authorised to finalise an Agreement with Rothschild Bioscience Managers Ltd to provide a seed investment of \$250,000 to develop an appropriate Business and Marketing Plan on the condition that the discount to apply to the conversion of the note to shares be capped at 25%.
- (15) granted the leave requested by the Vice-Chancellor for the May meeting.
- (16) approved the academic dress for the undergraduate degrees of Bachelor of Computer Science and Technology and Bachelor of Psychology, and of the postgraduate degrees of Master of Information Technology, Master of Pharmacy (Clinical), Master of Science (Environmental Science) and Master of Science (Microscopy and Microanalysis), as recommended.
- (17) approved the academic dress for the new joint degree, Bachelor of Liberal Studies, administered by the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science, as recommended.
- (18) noted a summary of the matters pursued under the provisions of Chapter 13 in 1997.

C4. Report of the Research Committee

Part I

The recommendation should read:

that the Board note the report.